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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 001042

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STATE PASS FAA FOR ACONLEY,
TRANSPORTATION FOR FAA;
DAKAR PLEASE PASS TO FAA REP ED JONES;
ROME PLEASE PASS TO TSA REP JOHN HALINSKI

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: JULY 12-19 LAGOS AIRPORT SECURITY ASSESSMENT AND
NORTH AMERICAN AIRLINES INSPECTION

¶1. (SBU) Summary. Members of the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) and the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) met the Transportation and Security Administration (TSA) team on July 19 to discuss measures to improve aviation security at Lagos Murtala Muhammad International Airport (MMIA). FAAN and NCAA officials agreed on the need to improve perimeter fence security, enhance access control, respond more effectively to crisis exercises, and certify screeners at the national level. They requested USG assistance to modernize their operations and upgrade their crisis response capacity, including conducting Man Portable Air Defense System (MANPADS) threat assessments for Lagos MMIA and Abuja International Airport. End summary.

Background

¶2. (SBU) In 2004, TSA sent a team to conduct an airport assessment in response to World Airways' proposal to launch direct air services from Lagos to New York. The 2004 team recommended NCAA/FAAN officials create a separate civil aviation security regulation, a national cargo program, improve their national training program guidelines, and allow NCAA to regulate FAAN aviation security training. In 2006, a follow-up TSA team inspected Lagos MMIA operations from July 12-19, and noted the following positive developments: a new civil aviation bill that is pending approval, the creation of a national cargo program, improved training guidelines, and a new security department within the NCAA to regulate aviation security. TSA team members included: Rome Representative Halinski and Senior Aviation Inspectors Reid and Moorgan.

¶3. (SBU) The TSA team inspected North American Airlines flight operations on July 17 and July 19. They were satisfied with passenger screening procedures, aircraft search procedures, baggage checks, and cargo screening. The major lapse was the passenger walk-through screening machine was inoperative during both NAA's July, 17 and July, 19 flights. They pointed this out to their Nigerian counterparts, recommending prompt repair. A NAA official told us July 28 the machine is still not functional. (Note: While a functioning passenger walk-through screening machine is not a TSA requirement, it greatly enhances a screener's ability to detect contraband. End note.)

TSA Identifies Need for Improved

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Perimeter Fence and Access Control

¶4. (SBU) The TSA team met NCAA Director General, Harold Demuren, at NCAA headquarters on July 19 to discuss aviation security at Lagos MMIA. Demuren agreed the NCAA needed to improve perimeter fence security by repairing holes in the fence, conducting routine maintenance, and clearing the fence line of excess foliage and plant overgrowth to prevent unauthorized access. He welcomed TSA's recommendation to improve airport access control by updating employee and vehicular Identification (ID) badges on an annual basis.

Improve Crisis Response Capabilities;
Certify Screeners at the National Level

¶5. (SBU) The TSA team met FAAN Lagos MMIA Chief Security Officer B.O. Olatunji on July 17-19 to discuss crisis response training. Olatunji and other FAAN security officials appeared unaware of the specifics of a crisis response hijacking exercise conducted in Abuja three months ago. Demuren acknowledged the need to disclose the results of crisis training exercises to a broader audience of security personnel to improve the NCAA and FAAN's crisis response capabilities.

¶6. (SBU) The TSA team met FAAN Aerodrome Department inspectors July 17 to discuss the process for certifying inspectors. Chief Designated Inspector A. Ajayi reported that FAAN tested and audited inspectors ultimately rather than through the NCAA. Demuren concurred that certification

LAGOS 00001042 002 OF 002

needed to occur at the national level and the NCAA, as regulator, should be testing the FAAN inspectors for annual re-certification.

USG Assistance for MANPADS Threat Assessments

¶7. (SBU) Demuren requested USG assistance modernizing NCAA operations and upgrading their management response capacity to enable Nigeria to obtain U.S. Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) Category 1 status. He requested USG assistance to conduct Man Portable Air Defense System (MANPADS) threat assessments for Lagos MMIA and Abuja International Airport.

¶8. (SBU) Demuren said the success of North American Airlines would lure other airlines to enter the Nigerian aviation market. Aviation security would become even more important as other airlines, specifically Nigerian airlines such as Arik Air and Bellview, began direct flights to the U.S. He said the Aviation Ministry is also pursuing Continental and Delta airlines to enter the Nigerian market. He envisioned these airlines would offer expanded direct air service routes from Lagos to various U.S. cities including Atlanta, Houston, Miami, and Los Angeles.

Comment

¶9. (SBU) The July 12-19 TSA inspections highlighted areas in which the NCAA and FAAN could improve airport security at Lagos MMIA. Upgrading aviation security at Lagos MMIA and other international gateway airports is crucial to obtain FAA Category 1 status. The Aviation Ministry has addressed previous aviation security concerns at Lagos MMIA, and has shown a willingness to incorporate TSA recommendations into their operations. We should continue to work closely with

them to upgrade and modernize their security operations. NCAA and FAAN welcome the idea of sending a USG team to conduct MANPADS threat assessments for Lagos MMIA and Abuja International Airport. End comment.

¶10. (U) This cable has been cleared by TSA Rome Representative John Halinski and Embassy Abuja.
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